



Livermore, NH Hand Stamp
President's Message • Upcoming Meetings/Shows
ATA Book "What's First" • ROPEX 2019
Cutler Mail Chutes • Dusty Miller

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Postal Hand Stamp from a Ghost Town

By Larry Rausch

Livermore, New Hampshire, is a ghost town located in Grafton County, New Hampshire. Now part of the White Mountain National Forest, Livermore was a small logging town from the late 1800's to early 1900's. The logging operation was started by Daniel Saunders Jr. and Charles W Saunders. The town was named for Samuel Livermore, a former United States Senator, who was the grandfather of Daniel Saunders' wife.

The town of Livermore's population was 103 in the year 1880. The population peaked in 1900 at 191. The logging company was unable to survive massive rain and flooding in 1927 and in 1928 the mill closed and the town was purchased by the Forest Service for \$9.00 per acre in 1934. The population was 0 in the 2010 census.



I acquired this "Standing Postal Hand Stamp" via an Ebay auction.

The hand stamp ring only contains date stamps for the decade from 1887 to 1898 although the Post Office was in operation from 1881 to 1931.



A moveable cloth ribbon runs between the stamp die and the envelope to be postmarked.

See page 3, to learn more about how small Livermore, New Hampshire actually is (or was!).

Dusty Miller Memorial Bicycle Rack



In the summer of 2004, several RPA members funded and placed a bicycle rack in memory of club member and friend Betty "Dusty" Miller in front of the American Philatelic Society Center in Bellafonte, PA. From left to right: George Fekete, Gene Yount, Ray Stone, Gordon Morrison, Bill Bauer, Ada Prill, Rick Kase, Jack Flannery, Ann Triggles and Tom Fortunato. Ada, Ann and Rick are holding a can of Genesee Light (Dusty's favorite beer) which they would soon use to christen the bike rack. Dusty would have been 100 years old on November 18th.

You can read much more about Dusty on page 6.



President's Message

Fellow RPA members,

With the snow starting to fly, it's time to turn your attention to your stamp collection. Note that we will be having only one meeting in December and one in January.

At the December 13 meeting, we will hold an RPA auction. All members can bring up to five items to auction. We will also continue with our gift exchange. If you bring a wrapped gift between \$5-10, you will receive a gift in exchange.

We have tentative programs for the first two meetings of 2019, but have several unfilled dates upcoming so we are looking to you for topics for presentation. Members are available to both help you prepare and/or will present your subject for you. But we need your information as the subject matter expert. Contact me if you have any suggestions.

Happy Holidays and see you December 13.

Larry Rausch, RPA President

Upcoming RPA Meetings

- Thurs. Dec 13th** Called Auction
See President's Message above
- Thurs. Jan. 10th** "Talking Cancellations"
by Florence Wright
- Thurs. Jan. 24th** – No meeting, facility unavailable
- Thurs. Feb 14th** - Tentative Joint meeting with
 Rochester Numismatic Association
- Thurs. March 14th** – TBA
- Thurs. March 28th** – No meeting, facility unavailable

We will also meet the second and fourth Thursdays in April, May and June

We do have a couple of other programs planned but not yet assigned to dates, but we also have multiple open dates throughout the winter and spring. Think about your philatelic interests and a presentation you might be able to give. Note that we only have one

meeting in January and March due to space availability at the JCC.

Meetings begin at 7 PM at the JCC in Brighton. The first half hour is for silent auction, show/trade among members, and general member interaction. The night's program begins at 7:30 PM.

Rochester Stamp & Coin Show

Sunday December 2nd, 10:30am – 4:00pm

North Greece Fireman's Field

Rt. 390N – Exit 26 – 3666 Latta Rd., Rochester

Contact – John Smoltz, McCloud Stamps & Coins

jstoltz@rochester.rr.com, 585-507-3533

Other Regional Stamp Shows/Bourses

Dec 22 Saint Catharines, ONTARIO

Best Western Stamp Show Hours 10am – 4pm

Best Western Hotel, QEW at Lake Street

Email: roystamp@niagara.com

Contact: Roy Houtby 905-934-8377

Jan 26 Saint Catharines, ONTARIO

70th CATHEX Show/Bourse – Hours 10am – 5pm

@ Grantham Lion's Club, 732 Niagara St.

contact stuart.keeley@sympatico.ca, 905-227-9251

<http://stcatharinesstampclub.ca/sfair.htm>

Feb 10 Syracuse Second Sunday Stamp Show

Maplewood Inn, Thruway Exit 36, Hours: 10-4:30

Contact: Ed Bailey, 315-452-0593

March 9-10 Buffalo (BUFPEX) Hours: 10-5

VFW Leonard Post, 2450 Walden Ave.

Contact: George Gates, gghq53@aol.com,

Phone - 716-633-8358

Visit our [online calendar](#) for even more area show news

It is time to pay 2018-2019 dues. In fact, it is past time! If you have not renewed your membership and wish to remain a member, please take a moment to locate the membership form online and send in your \$20 renewal payment. Or better yet attend the December meeting and pay then. Below is a direct link to the membership form.

<http://www.rpastamps.org/memberapplication.pdf>



so ... How small was Livermore, NH?

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Livermore, NH was so small that:

- The 1880 census recorded that 103 people lived in Livermore in 18 separate buildings. At that time it was also reported that skilled laborers were paid \$1.75/day, unskilled \$1.25/day; and the teacher was paid \$26/year.
- William Hull became postmaster in 1881, a year after a small pox epidemic had killed six townspeople. A stone monument in the woods now marks the burial location.
- By 1885, the town school had 28 students and an annual budget of \$145.
- By 1900, the town population had swelled to 191 as the lumber mill thrived.
- But the 1914 the town consisted of 11 households and a schoolhouse plus 2 hogs, 3 cows, and 48 horses.
- A devastating flood in November, 1927 severely damaged the lumber mill and destroyed the railroad bed into town. Neither would be rebuilt and the town slowly died.
- The 1930 census listed 23 people living in Livermore. By the time of the 1940 census, only four remained.

- Finally, in 1951, the town was officially disenfranchised and a ghost town was born that would eventually be totally absorbed into the White Mountains National Forest. Almost all evidence of the old mill site and the homes that once occupied the valley are completely gone.

Given the limited population, it is not surprising that covers and envelopes bearing the Livermore, NH hand stamp are rare. I have sought one for years since acquiring the hand stamp, but can only find them from the collections of others or in online museums.



This cover is from the [Barlett Historical Society webpage](#). It is dated 1883, just two years after the town established a post office.

Perhaps there are members of our club who have skied at either Loon Mountain or Waterville Valley? Both are just outside the old boundary lines for the ghost town of Livermore, NH



For those of you interested in topical philately, the **American Topical Association** has just published *What's First?*, a 335-page book that pictures and describes the first stamp for more than 800 topics. From abacus to zebra, it is colorfully illustrated with stamp images and descriptions of the first time a topic appeared on a stamp.

Spanning two centuries, the book explores firsts for popular topics, such as cats and railways/trains, to more esoteric topics, such as handshakes and dominoes. It is fully indexed by topic and country/Scott number.

Written by Canadian playwright and journalist Jack Gray, the book will be appealing to topical collectors, as well as those with other collecting interests, and also to exhibitors. It makes an excellent addition to any philatelic library.

What's First? is available in book and DVD format for \$40 plus shipping (Book: US \$4, Canada \$25.25, other countries \$35.75; DVD: US and Canada \$1.50; other countries \$3.50). Mail a check to ATA, PO Box 8, CARTERVILLE IL 62918-0008 or email americantopical@msn.com or call 618-985-5100. More information at www.americantopicalassn.org



Cutler Mail Chutes: A Rochester Invention

by Fred Haynes



In the late 19th century, building technology and urban development led to taller multistory buildings. Office and apartment buildings grew vertically. Naturally this led to new opportunities for creativity and invention and the Post Office Department was looking for improved methods to collect and move the mail from these buildings.

The idea of creating mail chutes to optimize the collection of outgoing mail from the taller buildings sounds like a simple innovative solution that should have occurred as soon as tall buildings were built. But it took until 1883 for the mail chute to be invented and the first installation was right here in Rochester, New York.

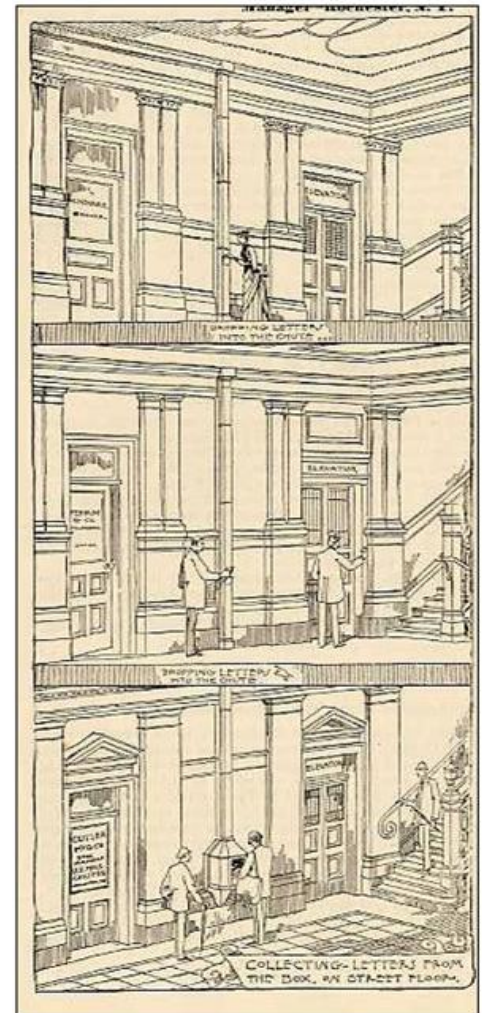
In 1879, James G. Cutler designed and built a seven story office building for Frank Elwood, a lawyer and the owner of the property on the northeast corner of "Main and State". The cornerstone was laid on May 13, 1879 and later that same year tenants began to occupy what would be called the Elwood Building.



Three views of the Elwood Building over the years. Left: 1916 (Lowerfall.org), Center: 1930's (Monroe County Library), Right: 1965, just two years prior to demolition ([from Democrat and Chronicle Archives](#))

Four years later, in 1883, Cutler added an innovative device to the Elwood Building intended as a convenience to both the tenants and the postman. He installed a mail chute that carried mail down to the lobby where the postman could collect it. This simple, yet elegant, device was such a success that Cutler patented his invention and started the Cutler Mail Chute Company. It is believed that more than 1600 Cutler Mail Chutes were installed across the country in the first 20 years that the company operated. Each carried the Cutler Company emblem depicted in the upper left of the title bar of this story.

In addition to his work as an architect and his Mail Chute Company, Cutler would become the 48th mayor of Rochester, New York, serving four years from January 1904 through December 1907. Cutler passed



1910 sketch of a Cutler Mail Chute
[Wikipedia Mail Chute entry](#)

away in 1927. The University of Rochester's Cutler Union, opened as a student union for UR women in 1933, was funded by a bequest from James Cutler.

Sadly, the Elwood building and the original Cutler Mail Chute fell victim to the wrecking boom in 1967, part of the Genesee Urban Renewal Project. Even the famous gargoyles

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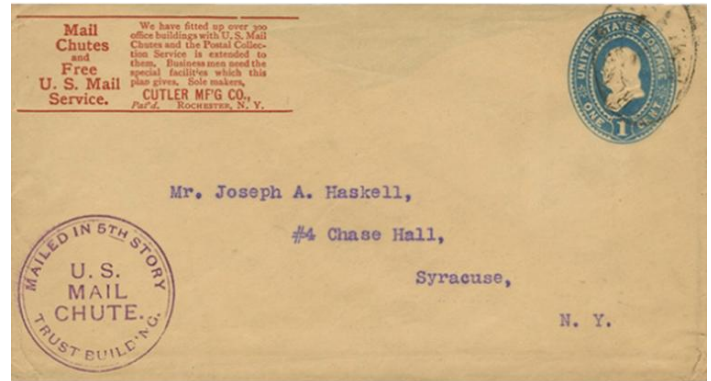
Cutler Mail Chutes – continued from previous page

that stretched out from each side of the top of the building (right side of title box on page 4) did not survive the ruthless renewal project. The Crossroads Building was later built on the site.



A novel auxiliary marking: One interesting aspect of office building mail chutes is that occasionally the mail would get stuck inside them, often for long periods of time. Once the problem was realized and rectified the post office would apply an auxiliary marking acknowledging why delivery was late and naturally absolving themselves of any blame! “Delayed in Mail Chute”: became yet another interesting postal marking for auxiliary marking collectors to seek among the older envelopes available at shows or online. This cover is from Hotchner, 2016. One infamous mail chute clog occurred in the McGraw-Hill Building in New York City in 1986. It is reported that the chute there was clogged for two weeks and over 40,000 letters accumulated before the problem was recognized!

Mail chutes do still exist in a number of buildings, particularly in Chicago and New York City. However, the National Fire Protection Association has banned them in all new building construction.



Another collectible involving mail chutes is to look for covers that carry either a Cutler Mfg. Co. advertisement or a postal service stamp locating the location of the mail chute where the letter was mailed. This 1887 cover has both such markings (Hotchner, 2016).

References:

[Cutler Mail Box and Chute](#), Smithsonian National Postal Museum webpage

Hotchner, J. M., 2016, [Handstamps explain Mail Chute Clogs: US Stamp Notes](#), Linn's Stamp News, March 23, 2016.

Lowerfalls.org, [Walking Tour of Rochester's One Hundred Acre Plot](#) – webpage

Monroe County Library, Rochester Images, [Elwood Buliding](#), webpage

RocWiki, and [Wikipedia](#) webpages

RPA News

ROPEX: We are now officially closer to ROPEX 2019 than we are to ROPEX 2018 and planning is well underway. Most dealers from last year are returning and we'll be in the same great venue in Canandaigua on May 17th and 18th. For all the details please visit our [2019 ROPEX webpage](#).

Highlights to date include our decision to honor both the 150th anniversary of the Trans-continental Railroad and the 50th anniversary of the First Man on the Moon with thematic cachets and other exhibits. Speaking of exhibits, our judges are all

selected and four exhibitors have already claimed spots. But there is plenty of room for more and we hope you will consider ROPEX as an opportunity to exhibit at a “World Series of Philately” event.

You will be hearing more about ROPEX 2019 in coming months as we plan for our big annual event.

MEETING EXHIBITS: Over the past three years we have had single page and multi-page member exhibit evenings at our club meetings. Several interesting and innovative thematic exhibits were displayed and explained by our creative

members. We'd like to try and recover these exhibits and perhaps build a digital file showing the diversity of our club's philatelic interests.

If you created an exhibit for one of these meeting nights and still have it intact, Florence Wright is seeking to scan and compile them, perhaps for a Powerpoint presentation at a future meeting. If they are available digitally, send them to Florence at fwright2@rochester.rr.com or you can bring them to the December or January meeting and we will scan them for you.

Betty "Dusty" Miller

Born 100 Years Ago

By Ada Prill



Did you know Dusty Miller? If you are not sure, then it's unlikely that you did. Dusty was not someone that people forget knowing! Dusty would have been 100 years old this month.

For RPA members of long standing, Dusty joined RPA in 1975 and was a lifetime member upon her passing in 2003. She collected postal markings and covers and served various officer roles within the organization. But to her friends Dusty was much more than a fellow philatelist.

She was born November 18, 1918, in Yorkshire, England, the third of four children in a family of coal miners. When she was a child, the family did not have enough money to pay for her to ride the bus to school, so she had a long walk every morning and evening. Finally they were able to afford a bicycle for her, and she was an avid bicyclist for some 70 years after that. She never owned a car but put many thousands of miles on her bikes. She did her first "century" – a bike trip of 100 miles – in 1936, with many similar feats following.

When World War II started in 1939, Dusty enlisted, serving her country until the end of the war in 1945. A few years after the war, she moved to the United States, settling in East Rochester. Dusty never married and was the only one in her family to emigrate. In a sense, her friends (philatelic and through other interests) became her family. She worked multiple jobs including stints at the East Rochester Library and as a caretaker for elderly ladies.

Her interest in philately grew from corresponding with service members. She became interested in the postal markings on incoming mail and she developed into a respected authority on military postal history. Some of her articles were published in books now in the RPA library.

All that may seem pretty dry, but Dusty was anything but boring! She loved sports, especially hockey, and shouted out what she thought of the game and the referees. She traveled a lot -- every other year she visited her family in England (where she kept a bike to use during her visits), and in alternate years she visited places as varied as Alaska, Fiji, New Zealand, and the Panama Canal. She was interested in nature and took wonderful photos, both

on her travels and around home. She was an outspoken feminist, and at times her experience as drill sergeant was obvious. Dusty read anything she could get her hands on, fiction and non-fiction, most definitely including postal history. She had a marvelous sense of humor and loved a good belly laugh. And she absolutely loved RPA and ROPEX. In her later years she wasn't able to tackle the jobs on the show committee she had previously taken on, so she was listed in the show program as "Spiritual Adviser," a title she accepted with pride.



Dusty Miller on one of her many bicycles.

If you asked Dusty if she wanted to go somewhere, the answer was never "no." Rick Kase and Jim Piecuch were two of her favorite drivers. She especially liked going to shows and First Day ceremonies with Rick and his father, Dick.

Dusty had the gift of making and keeping friends. At the reception following her memorial service, my husband commented that many people seemed to consider her their best friend. A chorus of "she was **my** best friend" came from almost everyone within hearing distance!

Dusty passed away in 2003, a few weeks after a major stroke and a few weeks short of her 85th birthday. She is still missed by many of us, still considered a "best friend."